

# Northwest Islander

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## Local Reservist wins USNRSF NERA Scholarship Award

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Going to college these days is more expensive than ever with the rising costs of tuition, books and supplies. So every little bit that a student doesn't have to pay out of pocket helps.

So when a chance to compete for any kind of scholarship comes along the competition is usually stiff.

That is why when Petty Officer 2nd Class (Aviation Warfare Specialist) Phillip Mabry, 29, from Wichita, Kansas found out he was chosen as a finalist in the Naval Enlisted Reserve Association (NERA) he was elated.

Recently Mabry received notice that he was a winner of one of four \$2,500 scholarships granted from the NERA and United States Naval Reserve Scholarship Fund for an essay he submitted in May.

Mabry's command was notified in July but Mabry wasn't made aware of his good fortune until he was commended by Rear Adm. Robert O. Passmore Sept. 6 and presented with a large orange ceremonial \$2,500 bill with the admirals image.

"It's great timing," said Mabry. "I am going to use the \$2,500 for tuition. It is coming at the perfect time since Western Washington University just raised tuition again."

The Informations Systems petty officer has a long term goal of being a Systems Analyst. He has been following along this career path by gaining his associate of arts degree from Skagit Community College and is well on his way to gaining a bachelors of science degree in Management Information Systems from Western Washington University.

Achieving goals is what Mabry is all about.

"I have set many goals for myself from the very short term to my future," said Mabry.

By setting goals for himself that are not always easy and finding ways to attain them made applying for the NERA scholarship almost seem simple.

"When I got started on the essay package for the scholarship it just seemed to come easy," said Mabry. "It only took me about an hour and a half to complete the essay and the better part of a day to finalize the package after I got going."

Mabry knows that today's economy is pretty rough, and that only by following through on his goals will he come out ahead.

"I know that I will be working as a systems analyst one day but I won't be leaving behind my naval career to make that happen," he said. "I plan on staying in the Reserves and applying for extra training opportunities if I can get them. I have had a great time in the Navy and want to continue serving my country."

Mabry has been a drilling Reservist for nearly three years since leaving the Navy active duty as a Personnelman.



Photo by JO1(SW) Todd Hack

**Rear Adm. Robert O. Passmore congratulates IT2(AW) Phillip Mabry on his winning entry for the contest by handing him a fake \$2,500 bill with the admiral's image.**